

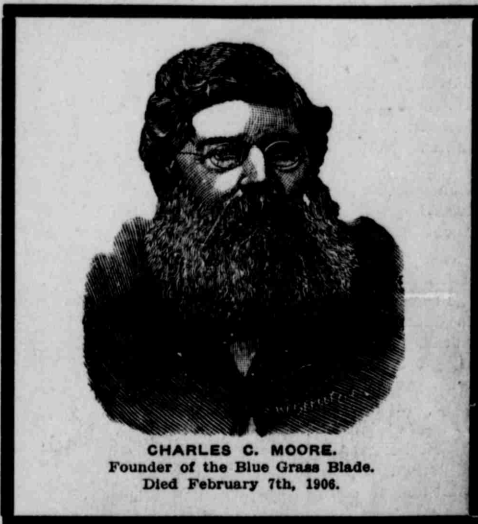
# BLUE GRASS BLADE

WE AIM TO CUT DOWN ERROR AND ESTABLISH TRUTH.

LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY, SUNDAY, MARCH 25, 1906

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, \$1.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE

VOLUME XIV. NUMBER 5.



CHARLES C. MOORE.  
Founder of the Blue Grass Blade.  
Died February 7th, 1906.

JAMES E. HUGHES - Editor and Publisher  
TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION

One issue for one year \$1.00 in advance. In clubs of Five NEW subscribers, 50 cents each.

Terms.—\$1.00 per year in advance; foreign subscription \$1.50 per year.

Five new subscribers sent for one year for \$2.50.

Send your subscription by registered letter, post office or express money order, New York draft, and if personal checks are sent add collection charges as local banks charge for collecting same.

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Subscriptions to the Blade are not discontinued at expiration unless so ordered by the subscriber. The courts invariably hold a subscriber responsible for all papers received until the paper is paid for in full and up to date and ordered discontinued.

Office of Publication is located at 153 W. Short St., Lexington, Kentucky.

Entered at the post office at Lexington, Kentucky, as Second Class Mail Matter.

Address all communication to Blue Grass Blade, P. O. Box 393, Lexington, Kentucky.

## EDITORIAL

Successful labor is the sire of fame.

To be in ignorance of a misfortune is a clear gain.

The first and greatest steps toward happiness is to be kindly charitable and benevolently tolerant.

Speech is the prime mover of the mind, for as a man thinks so is he, yet we are bound to realize that it is not every question that deserves an answer.

Good health and good sense are two of life's greatest blessings, and happy is that man or woman who can keep the golden mean between saying too much and too little.

Whosoever neglects learning in his youth loses the past is practically dead for the future. Hope, peace and sunshine are promises of nature open to all who seek their gifts. After all there is in the worst of fortune the best chances for a happy change.

Can it be true that an Almighty God, all-loving and benevolent Father gets angry at men for eating meat on Friday, for failing to take a cold bath in a rubber suit, for refusing to talk to your grub before eating, or declining to believe that man is doomed to hell for an honest opinion? What fools these mortals do be, to be sure!

Many earnest, but ignorant people not only believe the text of the Bible to be inspired, but the very headings of the chapters. It is difficult to reason with them. We should strive to avoid wantonly wounding their sensibilities and reach them through the milk of human kindness. They are incapable of argument, impervious to reason, and blind to demonstrated facts. Yet Progress must be forever moving forward and in its majestic march it must crush an occasional pismire.

We cannot bid Progress to stand forever in the same old rut like some abandoned road cart because across its shining pathway lies the honest prejudices of a zealous stupidity.

There was never a religion instituted upon the earth that the priest did not transform into an ardent folly. The cult that followed the teachings of Zoroaster, of Sidartha Guatama, of Confucius, and even of that figure denominated Christ, have all been behedged with foolish non-essentials, of self-evident absurdities, until intelligence was compelled to revolt and seek to find the cause of existence by the light of Science. It is an historical fact that the very evidences adduced by the priest in behalf of the true faith have caused most of the doubt with which the defenders of that faith have now to contend.

It is better that men should die like dogs than to be compelled through a debased industrial system to live like slaves. The church is responsible for more than a moiety of the industrial evils that now afflict and accurse mankind. The hands of Destiny's clock point irresistibly toward an upheaval, a revolution that is inevitable; a revolution that will come peaceably if it can, but forcibly if it must. Why should honest toiling millions care for the preservation of a government which is of, for and by the plutocrat? When industrial conditions are such that a working man is half the time an ill-fed serf, the other half a wandering vagabond, they are ripe for a change. There are hundreds of such in our fair land to-day and all they are lacking is a leader. Still the clergy preach the doctrine of contentment and ask a suffering people to fill up on faith.

If there should ever be brought into the world a religion founded upon virtue and not on foolish faith, then that will be the religion the whole world will follow. There can be no doubt in the mind of any honest and impartial student of history that the virtues of the Christian religion are mainly conspicuous by reason of their absence. Such virtues as now exist in the world are here in spite, and not because, of Christianity. Nothing so plainly demonstrates the intrinsic nobility of human nature as the fact that man has been able to outlive and outgrow the horrors and calamities of a religion.

### TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

One month has passed since we assumed both the editorial management and publication of the Blade. This will make the fourth issue we have edited and published and our aim has been to give our subscribers full value for their subscription.

You must now agree that the Blade is second to no weekly Freethought paper published in America and it is the cheapest. At the rate of fifty-two copies every year for the modest sum of one dollar it ought to find a place in the home of every Freethinker in the country. The Blade has no endowment funds or legacies of any kind to support it and it is altogether dependent upon its subscribers to keep its head above the flood of burdensome debts. Our subscribers can materially assist the Blade if they only go at it right. Surely there is not one on our mailing list who could fail, if he tried, in getting one subscriber in the next thirty days. Do you realize what that would mean to the Blade? It would mean that our circulation would just be doubled from what it is now, that it would penetrate twice as many homes; that its usefulness as a Freethought missionary would be increased; and above all, to us, it would mean the removal of all debts we now owe, put the Blade on easy terms and give it a little working capital.

All this could be done by each of our subscribers sending in just one new subscriber. If they could make it a club of five at the old rate it would confer still greater benefits upon us and the circulation would be still further increased.

Friends, we have shown you that the great improvement we have inaugurated not a mere experiment, but is permanent. We have made the Blade a paper of which Freethinkers may be justly proud. To do this we have had to incur additional expense. We would like to devote our entire time, labor and energy to the Blade, but as the paper is not self-sustaining we are now compelled to work at outside matters in order to earn a livelihood for those dependent upon us. Think of it, friends, what one subscription from each would do for us! This appeal is made directly to all. We do not ask a donation from you, simply that you induce some personal friend to take the paper and send in his subscription.

Now all make an effort and see who can be the first to send in one new subscriber.

The world, especially the Christian world, is cursed with too much hide-bound orthodoxy and too little humanity. On every hand one can hear and read of subscriptions being taken with which to build palatial churches, while in the centers of great population brawny men with families to support are glad of an opportunity to toil from sun to sun for a dollar a day. Is it not a wonder that God doesn't get tired of lending his name to such a religious layout?

### ATHEISM AND CRIME.

By a singular coincidence the following clipping has been sent to the Blade by no less than four of our subscribers. This fact is a practical demonstration of a mental remonstrance upon the part of Freethinkers toward the statement, and while it is almost too absurd to demand criticism, yet, as criticism has been requested in each case, we make answer accordingly.

The clipping, as will appear, bears a Chicago date line and is attributed to the Associated Press, one of the greatest news agencies in the civilized world. The author of the statement is evidently a Jewish rabbi, or, at least, a pastor of some Jewish congregation in the Windy City, as the denomination "Temple Israel" would induce one to infer. As a rule Jewish rabbis are learned men, liberal and tolerant. In this instance, however, but two conclusions are inevitable. Dr. Hirsch is either an ignorant individual, or a falsifier. If he knows and understands the facts, he also knows that he was uttering an untruth when he made that statement. If he does not know the facts then he is to be pitied for his ignorance and is certainly unqualified to assume the pastoral duties over any congregation.

The statement is as follows:—

CHICAGO, March 10.—"All the very bad criminals—I mean the murderers, hold-up men, burglars, and others, who are ever ready to commit murder in pursuit of their abominable business are atheists," said Dr. E. G. Hirsch at Temple Israel last night. "Murderers and the like are the only real atheists. There are no deliberate murderers who are not atheists. They have no God and no conscience and those are the very reasons why they are atheists and murders. No real Jews are atheists."

In the first place Atheism in its strictest sense is a condition of the mind concerning the postulates of theology in regard to the existence of a personal God. Technically speaking it has nothing whatever to do with morals. Atheists may evolve and formulate a system of morals based upon purely human ideals, in contradistinction to a theological system, and both systems may partake of each other. The Theist postulates a God as an intelligent designer or creator of the universe. The Atheist postulates a universe without God and suspends his judgment upon all ideas of God that are not satisfactory in terms incompatible with truths already demonstrated, and incapable of verification by human experience.

The statement that "all the very bad criminals, murderers, etc." are Atheists, is the merest vaudeville and was probably made to enable its author to obtain a little cheap notoriety, some small public notice, and get himself talked about. A skunk compels attention and makes a man notice him, and so can a Jewish rabbi of the Hirsch stripe. Both animals stink for attention.

It is useless to put forward the prison data obtainable in America. From our own personal knowledge such a statement is made easy of refutation. During the past five years four white men have met death by due process of law in Lexington upon conviction for the crime of murder. Four negroes are now in the county jail under sentence of death for murder, one being granted a new trial. It is with the white men who have gone that we prefer to deal here. All four were deeply religious. Three were Roman Catholic and one, we believe, was a Campbellite. One of the Catholics escaped the gallows by taking poison early in the morning of the day set for his execution. He had been convicted of wife murder. The other two Catholics were hung to vindicate the majesty of the law. On the scaffold they professed repentance, accepted the ministrations of the attending priest, were given conditional baptism and just before the fatal trap was sprung which sent them into eternity, both kissed the proffered crucifix. They had both been convicted of shooting a well known business man to death as he lay in his bed at night while attempting to burglarize his home. The other the Campbellite, had strangled his paramour to death and conveyed her corpse, at night to a pond, a mile away from the scene of his crime, and threw it into the water to convey an impression of suicide. As soon as he stepped upon the scaffold he knelt in silent prayer and urged the spectators to put their trust in God.

These are facts and facts are always stubborn things. What can be said concerning the religious convictions of criminals in Lexington can be said of other cities. An Atheist criminal is a rare specimen. Requiring a high degree of education, and an extraordinary standard of moral courage, to become an Atheist, crime is at once made an incompatibility. An Atheist may be equally capable of crime as a Theist, but they are the exception to a well established rule.

From the data furnished by prison officials of both Europe and America, few Atheists are found among the criminals for even petty crime, much less crimes of a higher degree.

When Dr. Hirsch says "No real Jews are Atheists" he is simply begging the question. We know of several Jews who are Atheists and Dr. Hirsch cannot rob them of their nationality. They are as much Jew as Dr. Hirsch and judging from his utterance, they are more truthful and present a higher type of moral manhood. Dr. Hirsch should

put his gall in pickle and tell his foolish fables to ancient dames, which done, he might with convenience pray the God he worships to transform him into a contented goat and turn him out to grass.

### UNDER WHICH CREED?

Christians teach—"Love thy neighbor as thyself."  
Freethinkers teach—"Justice towards each other."

It has been well said that as between persons comparisons are odious. As between principles, creeds and doctrines upon which are dependent the facts of our daily, social and business intercourse, such comparisons can be made with a perfect and acceptable propriety. No system can be properly blamed for the faults or sins of those who profess to follow it. Years ago an effort was made to catalogue and classify the "crimes of preachers" taken from daily newspaper reports and court statistics. These were useful only to a limited degree. They did not prove that the Christian system of morals was wrong, but they did prove to be wrong the absurd claims made by Christians concerning their moral system. As a rule preachers assume a "holier than thou" attitude and by reason of the more ridiculous claim that they are the authorized expounders of God's will, they have been erroneously regarded as individuals of a superior quality to laymen. Naturally enough, if the Christian moral system was capable of exerting any power or influence for good over the minds of men, preachers should be less guilty of crime than any other profession.

The real value of any system of morality in its effects upon human conduct can only be measured by what it produces. If it produces only virtue it may be classed as a virtuous system, but if vice be mingled therewith then it becomes an indifferent system, to say the least. True, there is some good, some virtue, in every system but that which produces the most is best. It may not be perfect but it is the best known to man. The best system of morals has been well defined as that which produces "the greatest possible good to the greatest possible number." Measured by this standard Christian morality, with its future rewards and its heaven and hell, must be classed

as a system of hypocrisy. Of professing Christians the greatest immorality appears. The criminal statistics of the United States will bear out this assertion. A perusal of the criminal records of our country will show that there is a greater preponderance of crime among the Christian clergy, exclusively, than there is among the great body of Freethinkers. In proportion to their numbers the per centage is fearfully against the preachers.

Glancing at the texts quoted above and examining them in the light thus afforded, we might well ask, "Under which text?" The one given to us by the Christian is impossible in practice, that given by the Freethinker is sufficient for all the practical affairs of this life. We cannot exactly love our neighbors even as ourselves, but we can be just in our dealings with friend and foe alike. If justice were more universally practiced there would be need for charity. If justice prevailed in every walk of life there would be neither the extremely rich and the extremely poor. If justice could be given an abiding place in the hearts of men there would be less suffering and crime in the world. If justice were given its proper recognition the frauds and shams of modern society would cease to be. With justice enthroned fewer children would have to cry themselves in hunger to sleep.

The evident weakness of the Christian system lies in its doctrine of exemption by repentance. The paramount strength of Freethought is to be found in the declaration that the natural consequences of our acts are inevitable and we must face them ourselves. Christianity offers men a crucified bill of indemnity as a medium of escaping punishment for sin. Freethought declares that there is no such escape and that nature, following the law of compensation, demands full satisfaction for every wrong committed.

Ask yourselves the question, Under which text?

### DID CHRIST SMILE?

It was said of an ancient English king, that following the accidental drowning of his son, he "never smiled again." The statement, however, would lead one to infer that prior to his bereavement, he would give vent to an occasional smile.

Now let any person scan the scriptures carefully, scrutinize every pictorial or statesque production of what is assumed to be Christ, and then make answer to the question propounded in this caption: "Did Christ smile?" Even the most liberal of his followers are bound to make a negative reply. As a matter of fact there is not a presumed likeness of Christ extant which depicts him wearing a smile. Nowhere in the alleged account of his life as given in the New Testament is he mentioned as giving vent to laughter.

On the contrary he is represented as a man of continual gloom and sorrow. His biographers, so-called, picture him as sweating in bloody agony,

(Continued on Page Four.)